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# ASHEVILLE CONFERENCE

MAY 23-29, 1907

THE Association and its hosts met in the Ball-room of the Battery Park Hotel on Thursday, May 23, 1907, at 9 p. m. In behalf of the local committee, Judge Jeter C. Pritchard, of Asheville, took the chair. He called the meeting to order and introduced Hon. Z. T. WINSTON, Lieutenant-governor of North Carolina, who spoke as follows in welcome to the Association:

## GOV. WINSTON'S ADDRESS

We regret the necessary absence of the Governor of the state.

The constitution of North Carolina imposes on the Lieutenant-governor the duty of acting in the absence of the Governor, in matters of state. I was doubtful if this occasion is embraced within that constitutional requirement. To be certain of my duty, I searched that much quoted instrument to find out if an address of welcome to the American Library Association is a duty imposed on me—when his Excellency could not attend. I did not, however, find such a requirement in express terms, but I did find a warrant for my coming in Section 25, Article 1, in which is written in part: "The people have a right to assemble together for the common good." (Laughter)

And so, Mr Chairman, if I am not following the line of duty, I am at least responding to your gracious invitation, my own earnest inclination, and the spirit of genuine hospitality that prevails in our state.

In the name of North Carolina I extend to this Association and to those who attend it a genuine, hearty welcome to our state. May be you do not know the extent of a North Carolina welcome. It is *sui generis*. No man has a clear conception of what hospitality means until a North Carolinian has met him at the front gate, and grasped

his extended hand with a hearty "Howdy—Come in," thereby conferring on him absolute ownership of the premises. Your Association meets on congenial soil, and in a propitious hour. The two contending forces planted in American life three centuries ago, the one at Jamestown and the other at Plymouth rock, have united on the basis of liberty for every man, and free education for every child. As long as these two streams diverged, no real significance could have been attached to this meeting. In fact such a meeting would not have been held here. The colony planted on the bleak, barren coast of Cape Cod grew rich and strong in educated labor, in labor saving machinery, in commerce, in trade, in manufactures, in domestic economy. It became the land of the steam engine, the steam boat, the mill, the factory, the railroad, the telegraph. The basis of the Jamestown colony was not universal education. Its leaders were giants and heroes in intellect and in character. They planted a commonwealth unequalled in modern times for the patriotism, bravery and virtue of its men; for the beauty, purity and grace of its women; for the matchless eloquence of its orators, for the fortitude and gallantry of its soldiers and its unconquerable devotion to personal liberty and constitutional government. It was an agricultural colony of strong and simple life, without cities, without factories, with little commerce. Between these two colonies began a struggle for the possession of the continent. Universal education made the Puritan strong. The absence of it developed the great Cavalier leaders. The struggle closed in blood, and the two forces united on the only tenable ground, universal manhood and educated labor.

In New England the library was free to all the people. There were no free libra-

ries in the South. The leaders of the South were the best read Americans. Leisure and inclination gave them opportunity for reading the best books. The free library, however, had no place in our patriarchal life. And the library as such, with its dusty shelves and its seclusion, has no place in American life; but as a working tool in our complex and exacting life, the library is of first importance. Recognizing this fact, the state of North Carolina is beginning to establish small libraries as a part of our public school system. It is a small beginning we are making and it may seem trifling to those of you who sit in the seclusion of your hundred thousand volumes. Remember that our scattered population still imposes on us the task of dealing with rural situations. With this fact in mind, it means much to know that within five years \$55,000 have been spent in rural libraries in this state; that nearly two thousand rural libraries have been established, containing more than 150,000 volumes. One mountain county has sixty-two such libraries and there is not a county in the state without a library of this kind. (Applause) North Carolina was interested in public libraries nearly two hundred years ago. At a general biennial assembly held at the house of Capt. Richard Sanderson at Little River, begun on the 17th day of November, 1715, and continued by several adjournments until the 19th of January, 1716, many public and private acts were passed for the peace and prosperity and happiness of the colony. Among them may be found "An Act for appointing a town in the county of Bath and for securing the public library belonging to St Thomas parish in Pamlico."

It is a far cry from that date to the present. The spirit that prompted the passage of such an act has long slumbered; but it was sure to wake; and after a repose of two centuries it has arisen in strength and power, with a determination to put a useful book in the hands of every North Carolinian. In performing the task

assigned me, permit me to use the homely yet expressive and cordial language of North Carolina: "Howdy—Come in." (Applause)

Judge PRITCHARD then addressed the Association, welcoming it on behalf of the city of Asheville.

#### JUDGE PRITCHARD'S ADDRESS

Mr President, representatives of the American Library Association, ladies and gentlemen, we esteem it a great honor to have the American Library Association hold its annual session in our city. The Association has accomplished as much as, if not more than, any other agency for the cause of popular education. This is an age of organization and cooperation and without which it is well nigh impossible for any movement to succeed.

While North Carolina has not made as much progress in library extension as some of the other states, at the same time, it is a source of gratification to be able to state that we have well equipped libraries in almost every town of any size, and the day is not far distant when our state may invite favorable comparison in this respect with her more fortunate sister states of the union. Under these circumstances, it is exceedingly gratifying to have this Association visit our city, feeling as we do, that its presence at this time will have a tendency to stimulate and encourage those who are interested in this great movement for the development of the intellectual man.

The people of this vicinity have ever been noted for their hospitality. Our women are among the fairest, (Applause) our men are celebrated for their generosity, (Applause) and our magnificent mountain scenery is unsurpassed. (Applause)

As a representative of the Asheville library association, as well as the city of Asheville, it affords me great pleasure to extend to you an old fashioned North Carolina welcome, and in doing so, I employ the term in its broadest and best sense. (Applause)

While, geographically speaking, Asheville is a Southern city, and our people are proud of the South, her history and traditions, nevertheless, we are Americans and are devoted to America and her institutions, (Applause) and are ready to follow the lead of the stars and stripes whenever our country's honor is involved. (Applause) Our people possess that love of country and patriotism which is characteristic of the mountaineers of every clime. Asheville is truly a cosmopolitan city and owing to her many attractions and advantages is fast becoming the leading convention city of the South. Our population is composed of representatives of almost every section of the union and under these circumstances it is peculiarly fitting that this body, composed as it is of representatives of the highest type of American citizenship, should assemble in our midst.

Asheville is the capital of the county of Buncombe, and on every hand is to be found that spirit of hospitality which was expressed in the motto that was inscribed over the portals of the mansion of one of North Carolina's famous sons of former days:

"To Buncombe Hall, Welcome All."

However, I do not wish to be understood as talking for "buncomb" on this occasion, but rather for the good people of Buncombe. I am authorized to say that this welcome is not to be confined to the present occasion, but is continuing in its nature and that you will always find a cordial welcome awaiting you, and in the language of the old couplet, I will say:

"Come in the evening, or come in the morning,  
Come when you are asked, come without warning,  
There will always be a glad welcome for you;  
And the oftener you come the more we will adore you."

I thank you. (Applause)

Judge PRITCHARD: It now becomes my pleasure to introduce Mr Louis R.

Wilson, the Secretary of the State library association, who will deliver an address of welcome on behalf of that body.

#### DR WILSON'S ADDRESS

Seemingly, nothing can be added to the completeness of the welcome which his Excellency the Governor and his Honor Judge Pritchard have extended you, and I dare not attempt to add thereto; but whether an addition be possible or not, in behalf of the North Carolina Library Association I want you to know how wonderfully glad we, your fellow workers, are that you are sharing this great meeting with us, and that it is in your hearts to be at home with us and to allow us to enter into the richness and helpfulness of your experiences. And if I may be allowed to say, in a particular way, why the State Library Association hails your coming with such genuine pleasure, it may be found to be due to the two following causes:

1 Since your meeting in Atlanta in 1899, the library, as an institution making for broader culture and saner life, has entered upon a new, rapidly enlarging field of usefulness. From Maryland to Texas, this new power has been making itself felt, and to-night, through the influence of the Southern library school of Atlanta, the Department of libraries of the Southern educational association, and the individual working library, whatever its nature and wherever established,—the great South stands ready to compare experiences with you and through this interchange of ideas to be stimulated to more effective endeavor.

2 In North Carolina a vital library spirit dates back only ten years, and it is really only since 1900 that definite results in library activity have been accomplished. But to-night 1600 rural school libraries, with a collection of 150,000 volumes, are placed at the disposal of the school children of the state, and the value of the open book in the hand of the child is being emphasized as it has never been before. A system of travelling libraries has been

established in several of the Eastern counties and the problem of renewing interest in the book collection has been partially solved. Within just three years a State Library Association has been formed with a membership of seventy-five, and everywhere in the state influences have been set in operation which will result, sooner or later, in the formation of a public sentiment in favor of the library sufficiently strong to compel every community, whatever its condition, to provide for itself some form of library facilities.

It is for these reasons that we are most glad to have you with us, because we recognize in you fellow workers who can aid us in our endeavor and can enter fully into the joy of our achievement.

In the name of the North Carolina Library Association, I greet you. May valley, and stream, and peak, and the limitless blue above you, bring you inward happiness and joy, and may the warmth of heart which we feel in welcoming you, gladden and cheer you in the coming days.

To these addresses of welcome the **PRESIDENT** of the Association responded as follows:

Governor Winston, Judge Pritchard, Dr Wilson, ladies and gentlemen: In the name of the American Library Association, I return to the state of North Carolina, to the city of Asheville, and to the North Carolina Library Association, the thanks of the American Library Association for their cordial greetings and for the very pleasant things which they have said in regard to our meeting here. We on our part are glad to be here. We have experienced before this the hospitality of the South. Eight years ago we met at Atlanta. Since that time we have watched with interest the development of the Southern library movement. We now have come to learn by direct observation its strength and to give our applause to those who have been leaders in it. North Carolina has the honor of having shown the way to its sister states in the declaration of its independence, of having shown many

times since an independence of judgment rare among the communities of the union, and has sent out to the states in the West and in the North, men whom we have found to be citizens to be proud of and friends to cherish. We are sure that they who stay behind are of the same fibre, and we may look to them for an impartial and independent judgment of the claims of library work upon the consideration of the state and of the community, and given such, we shall be sure of their recognition of its benefits.

To the city of Asheville, we give thanks likewise. The beauty of its situation, the healthfulness of its climate, are known to nearly every citizen of the union. They are known to many of us personally, but certainly to all of us by reputation, and we shall return sure to spread that reputation, glad that we have been here. We hope to give you some more personal and direct benefit from our meeting. The superintendent of your school system is the president of the Southern education association, and he is to talk to us and to take counsel with us as to the relation of the libraries to the schools, one of the most important topics in the whole program of the Association.

To the North Carolina Association, Dr Wilson, we give fraternal greetings as well as thanks. You are responsible for our being here. You have asked us to come and help you, but knowing from our own members and others the progress made in North Carolina in the last five years, we feel that any suggestion that we come to help you is rather in the nature of an impertinence. We hope, indeed, that some of the communities of the South which have not yet awakened to the importance of library work may be strengthened in many ways, but more especially by the feeling of fellowship which is the great benefit of our meetings. We hope, too, that this meeting may be only one of a series of meetings in the South. The library development is becoming so diversified, the ways of working are multiplying

so fast, that an occasional meeting of the Association in every section of the country is necessary in order that the whole country may be kept in touch with the work. We hope, therefore, in the years to come that we shall meet the members of the North Carolina Association as guests, if not as hosts, but better still as fellow members of the American Library Association.

And in conclusion, I regret that I am unable to express more eloquently and fluently our thanks and appreciation of your hospitality. If this were a convention of ministers, or lawyers, or teachers, you might reasonably expect more from its presiding officer, but I beg you to remember that all librarians have acquired perforce a habit of silence. In this annual conference we have our one chance to unloosen our tongues, but unfortunately the practice will come too late for the present need. Again, gentlemen, I thank you in behalf of the American Library Association for your cordial welcome and greetings.

### FIRST SESSION

(Ball Room, Battery Park Hotel, Friday Morning, May 24, 1907)

The first general session of the Asheville Conference was called to order by the president, Clement W. Andrews, at 9.50 o'clock, and the twenty-ninth annual meeting of the American Library Association was declared open and ready for business.

The PRESIDENT: The report of the proceedings of the meeting of 1906 has been printed and distributed to members. Unless objection is now made, it will stand approved. The Chair hears no objection, and the report is approved.

The Executive board has arranged a program for this meeting, of which printed copies will be distributed. This program will be followed strictly except as the Association may determine otherwise, and except also for such minor changes in order as may seem desirable.

According to custom, an address from

the president is placed first. Before beginning, however, I desire to repeat my congratulations of last night, and our thanks to our hosts that we meet under such pleasant circumstances. I would add congratulations that we meet in such goodly numbers, and would especially express our profound thankfulness that our losses since the time of the last meeting have been so few.

The program includes two chief topics: the first, the Library movement in the South; and the second, the Use of books. The latter is the subject of my address.

### THE USE OF BOOKS.

The "Use of books" is neither an equivalent of the whole subject of "Library work" nor is it a question solely of the information desk or reference department. It excludes on the one hand, many important problems of library administration, and includes, on the other hand, many which have to be considered in connection with nearly every department. It affects directly the planning of the building, the equipment of the rooms, the selection of the staff, the selection of the books, cataloging them, bringing them to the notice of readers, influencing the choice for home reading as well as for use in the library, the granting of special privileges such as immediate access to the shelves, and the provision of special accommodations, such as rooms for photographic work, drafting, dictation and typewriting.

These questions affect library administration fundamentally, and should be decided by the application of certain principles, though with due regard also to other factors, such as scope, location, and means, which will vary with each library. Many special applications and many of the considerations affecting them will be brought out in the papers which are to follow, but the central idea should be that expressed so tersely and accurately by the motto of the Association: "The best reading for the greatest number at the least cost."

Notwithstanding Dr Hale was my pastor